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find them connected in real life, with much that is ennobling and elevated, with traits of sagacity, benevolence, moral courage and magnanimity. These are qualities, which by no means impair any comic effect those peculiarities may have ; they rather relieve and heighten it. They transform it from mere buffoonery to the finest humor. When this is done, something is done to exalt our national reputation abroad, and to improve our national character at home. It is also a sort of public benefit, to show what copious and valuable materials the private lives and daily habits of our countrymen offer to the writer of genius. It is as if one were to discover to us rich ores and gems lying in the common earth about us. But our readers must by this time be weary of our comments, and we dismiss them, with pleasure, to the perusal of the work itself.

ART. II.—*Reminiscences of Charles Butler, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn ; with a Letter to a Lady on Ancient and Modern Music.* From the Fourth London Edition. 12mo. pp. 351. New York. Bliss and White.

To those who would gather knowledge without much expense of thought, or labor of study, better pleased to loiter in the smooth places of literature, than toil up its rugged ascents in search of its higher trophies ; and to those who would relax their severer studies with an agreeable variety of literary anecdote, traits in the character of distinguished men, and curious historical facts ; to all such persons, these remembrances of a veteran scholar, and amiable man, may be highly recommended. The author has long been known, as a writer and a lawyer of considerable eminence, and it is the purpose of this work, which he insinuates may be his last, to comprise such scattered thoughts as had occurred to him in the course of his studies, relate some of the incidents in his own life connected with his literary pursuits, and to add notices of all his previous publications. These ends he has attained in such a manner, as to mingle amusement with the instruction he communicates, and to win the reader not more by the variety and interest of his topics, than by the ease and

simplicity of his style, and the fair, candid, temperate, and liberal views, which mark the operations of his mind. As a scholar, or man of learning, his works abundantly testify that few have ranged so widely in the fields of human knowledge, or returned laden with stores so rich and abundant, notwithstanding his intense devotedness to a very absorbing and laborious profession. The following short notice of himself affords a key, by which the mystery of his great attainments is easily unlocked.

‘Very early rising,—a systematic division of his time,—abstinence from all company and from all diversions not likely to amuse him highly,—from reading, writing, or even thinking on modern party politics,—and, above all,—never permitting a bit or scrap of time to be unemployed,—have supplied him with an abundance of literary hours. His literary acquisitions are principally owing to the rigid observance of four rules ;—to direct his attention to one literary object only at a time ; to read the best book upon it, consulting others as little as possible ;—where the subject was contentious, to read the best book on each side ;—to find out men of information, and, in their society, to listen, not to talk.’ p. 23.

A life of fifty years thus employed could not fail to accomplish things, which might at first seem incredible. No virtue is more rare than economy in the division and use of time, and in the few instances where this has been rigidly practised, the world has seen prodigies of attainment. Seneca tells of the vigilance with which he seized on every moment of time as it passed ; not a day at its close could reproach him with idleness, and his studies were drawn out to a late hour of the night. In one of his beautiful Epistles he says ; *Nullus mihi per otium dies exit ; partes nocturnum studiis vindico ; non vaco somno, sed succumbo, et oculos vigilia fatigatos, cadentesque, in opere detineo.* Sir William Jones is a remarkable example in point ; with talents of a high order, it is true, but more especially by an industry that never tired, and a methodical appropriation of every moment of his time to some definite purpose, he made acquisitions in the midst of a busy life that astonish the mind, accustomed to observe only the ordinary results of intellectual labor. His aims were always fixed high, and he seldom fell below them ; the vast schemes, which he did not live to mature, were not without their use in carrying his mind upward,

and giving it the excitement of a lofty motive. It cannot be denied, that there is sometimes danger to be apprehended from this very propensity for grasping so much. By indulging in so wide a range, the mind necessarily acquires a habit of dwelling on particulars, and, without the exercise of much caution and good judgment, its energy will be lost on trifles; *magno conatu magnas nugas*. In the same proportion it will lose the power of developing broad principles, and of drawing from particulars, general and philosophical conclusions. This was doubtless in some degree true of Sir William Jones; not that his mind was deficient in the powers of philosophical discrimination, but his eagerness for new attainments was so great, that time was not left, nor space in his thoughts, for arrangement and combination. In many cases he reasoned and thought profoundly, but take all his labors together, we are amazed rather at what he learnt, than at what he has taught.

There is good counsel in Seneca's Second Epistle, on the subject of diversity of study, which our readers will pardon us for translating. 'The best proof of a well ordered mind,' says Seneca, 'is its power of remaining quiet and keeping company with itself. Be cautious, that the reading of many authors, and those of all descriptions, do not produce vagueness and instability. Close application to a few writers of rare merit is necessary, if you would treasure up anything, which will settle faithfully into the mind. He, who is everywhere, is nowhere; and the traveller, who is always in motion, may experience much hospitality, but make no friendships. So it will be with those, who dwell not on a particular branch of study, till they become familiar with it, but are always hurrying from one thing to another. Nothing so much impedes a restoration to health, as a frequent change of medicine; a wound will not heal, which is irritated by repeated applications; a plant will not flourish, which is often removed to a new soil; and, in short, perpetual change is injurious in everything. A multitude of books distracts the mind. Since, therefore, you cannot read all you can obtain, it is enough that you possess as many as you can read. "But" you reply, "I wish to look a little into this volume, and a little into that." It is the mark of a fastidious stomach to desire to taste of many dishes, which, when of various

kinds, vitiate rather than nourish the body. Hence let your reading be confined to the most approved authors, and if at any time you seek for amusement in others, return again to the first.' Sir Matthew Hale is an illustrious example of the wonders that may be wrought, by a methodical use of time; his application was unremitted, and the compass of his knowledge almost without bounds, but he knew how to estimate it rightly; he made all his acquisitions subservient to discovering the springs of society, unfolding the principles of human nature, teaching lessons of practical wisdom, and acting on the condition of man. He sought knowledge for these ends alone, and valued particulars only as they opened light into some new truth, and conducted him to useful and comprehensive results.

Our Reminiscent entertains us with a long chapter on the Letters of Junius; if forsooth we may be allowed the intimation, that anything entertaining can now be said on a subject so completely exhausted. There is little new in the Reminiscent's observations, inasmuch as he has left the great mystery of the authorship of these letters as much in the dark as it was before, yet there is an interest in hearing a man describe things in which he has been personally concerned, and talk of distinguished men with whom he has been in habits of intimacy. This kind of interest will be found in the author's discussion on the Letters of Junius. The argument in favor of Sir Philip Francis having been the author of these Letters has been pursued with so much success, chiefly on the ground of resemblance in the handwriting, that Mr Butler would destroy its force by supposing Sir Philip to have been the amanuensis of Junius, and copied the Letters for the press. When it is considered, that the known writings of Sir Philip bear no comparison, in the character of style, or power of thought, with the Letters of Junius, this hypothesis is more than probable. The Reminiscent examines the evidence on which the other candidates have been brought forward as the authors of these Letters, but after going round the circle, and telling now and then an agreeable anecdote on the way, he sits down at the point from which he first set out, fain to acknowledge that he has found no clue by which to penetrate the mysterious labyrinth.

The parts of the volume, which will be perused with most delight by the greater portion of readers, are those relating

to distinguished British statesmen and orators. As the Reminiscent was either personally acquainted with these men, or had often witnessed the public exhibition of their talents, and knew their characters, habits, and the estimation in which they were held by their contemporaries, his descriptions are doubtless to be relied on for their fidelity. His manner, style, and spirit, will speak for themselves, in the examples quoted below. Of Lord Erskine he says,

‘The eloquence of this remarkable man was an era at the bar. His addresses to juries have not been equalled; they alike captivated their understandings, their imaginations, and their passions. He often rose to the highest oratory; but it was always simple; and even in his sublimest flights, there was much that was very familiar; but this rather set off than clouded their splendor, rather increased than diminished their general effect. His skill in the conduct of a cause, and in the examination of witnesses, has never been surpassed; his discretion never forsook him, even in his highest forensic enthusiasm; his manners were always most gentlemanly; at the bar he was uniformly loved and admired; and, when he accepted the seals, no one, as lord Eldon justly remarked of him, could have a greater wish to discharge properly the office, which was conferred on him, or greater talents to qualify him for a proper discharge of it. A true friend to constitutional liberty, he was its constant and animated advocate; but he never failed in respect to the crown, or sacrificed to the prejudices or vagaries of the populace. It is highly to the credit of the two noble lords, that, though the difference of their politics repeatedly placed them in a state of forensic conflict, neither ever said that to the other, or of the other, which it was displeasing to him to hear. This circumstance Lord Erskine himself noticed to the Reminiscent.’ pp. 61, 62.

Lord Chatham is thus described.

‘The nature of the eloquence of this extraordinary man, it is extremely difficult to describe. No person in his external appearance was ever more bountifully gifted by nature for an orator. In his look and his gesture, grace and dignity were combined, but dignity presided; the “terrors of his beak, the lightnings of his eye,” were insufferable. His voice was both full and clear; his lowest whisper was distinctly heard, his middle tones were sweet, rich, and beautifully varied; when he elevated his voice to its highest pitch, the house was completely filled with the volume of the sound. The effect was awful, except when he wished to cheer or animate; he then had spirit stirring notes, which were perfectly irresistible. He frequently rose, on a sudden, from a very low to

a very high key, but it seemed to be without effort. His diction was remarkably simple, but words were never chosen with greater care ; he mentioned to a friend of the Reminiscent, that he had read twice, from beginning to end, *Bailey's Dictionary* ; and that he had perused some of *Dr Barrow's Sermons* so often, as to know them by heart.

‘ His sentiments, too, were apparently simple ; but sentiments were never adopted or uttered with greater skill ; he was often familiar and even playful, but it was the familiarity and playfulness of condescension ; the lion that dandled with the kid. The terrible, however, was his peculiar power. Then the whole house sunk before him. Still he was dignified ; and wonderful as was his eloquence it was attended with this most important effect, that it impressed every hearer with a conviction, that there was something in him even finer than his words ; that the man was infinitely greater than the orator ; no impression of this kind was made by the eloquence of his son, or his son's antagonist.

‘ Still,—with the great man,—for great he certainly was,—manner did much. One of the fairest specimens, which we possess of his lordship's oratory, is his speech, in 1766, for the repeal of the stamp act.

“ Annuit, et nutu totum tremefecit Olympum.”

‘ Most, perhaps, who read the report of this speech, in Almon's Register, will wonder at the effect, which it is known to have produced on the hearers ; yet the report is tolerably exact, and exhibits, although faintly, its leading features. But they should have seen the look of ineffable contempt with which he surveyed the late Mr Grenville, who sat within one of him, and should have heard him say with that look, “ As to the late ministry, every capital measure they have taken, has been entirely wrong.” They should also have beheld him, when addressing himself to Mr Grenville's successors, he said, “ As to the present gentlemen,—those, at least, whom I have in my eye,”—(looking at the bench on which Mr Conway sat,)—“ I have no objection ; I have never been made a sacrifice by any of them. Some of them have done me the honor to ask my poor opinion, before they would engage to repeal the act ; they will do me the justice to own, I did advise them to engage to do it, but notwithstanding, (for I love to be explicit,) I cannot give them my confidence. Pardon me, gentlemen,” (bowing to them,) “ confidence is a plant of slow growth.” Those, who remember the air of condescending protection, with which the bow was made, and the look given, when he spoke these words, will recollect how much they themselves, at the moment, were both delighted and awed, and what they themselves then conceived of the immeasurable superiority of the orator over every human be-

ing that surrounded him. In the passages which we have cited, there is nothing which an ordinary speaker might not have said ; it was the manner, and the manner only, which produced the effect.' pp. 121—123.

The parallel between Fox and Pitt, which we next introduce, is loosely drawn, but it contains some discriminating traits of the character of their minds and eloquence.

‘On his first separation from the ministry, Mr Fox assumed the character of a whig ; and, from this time, uniformly advocated, in consistency with that noble character, the great cause of civil and religious liberty, on their broadest principles.

‘Almost the whole of his political life was spent in opposition to his majesty’s ministers. It may be said of him, as of Lord North, that he had political adversaries, but no enemy. Good nature, too easily carried to excess, was one of the distinctive marks of his character. In vehemence and power of argument he resembled Demosthenes ; but there the resemblance ended. He possessed a strain of ridicule and wit, which nature denied to the Athenian ; and it was the more powerful, as it always appeared to be blended with argument, and to result from it. To the perfect composition, which so eminently distinguishes the speeches of Demosthenes, he had no pretence. He was heedless of method ; having the complete command of good words, he never sought for better ; if those, which occurred, expressed his meaning clearly and forcibly, he paid little attention to their arrangement or harmony. This detracts from the merit of his speeches, when they are read ; but, when they were delivered, it perhaps added to their effect, as it tended greatly to make the hearers believe that he was above art, and spoke from conviction. Nothing more strongly recommends a speaker to his audience, or gives greater force to his oratory.

‘The moment of his grandeur was, when, after he had stated the argument of his adversary, with much greater strength than his adversary had done, and with much greater than any of his hearers thought possible, he seized it with the strength of a giant, and tore and trampled on it to destruction. If, at this moment, he had possessed the power of the Athenian over the passions or the imaginations of his hearers, he might have disposed of the house at his pleasure, but this was denied to him ; and, on this account, his speeches fell very short of the effect, which otherwise they must have produced.

‘It is difficult to decide on the comparative merit of him and Mr Pitt ; the latter had not the vehement reasoning, or argumentative ridicule, of Mr Fox ; but he had more splendor, more imagery, and much more method and discretion. His long, lofty, and

reverential panegyrics of the British constitution, his eloquent vituperations of those, whom he described as advocating the democratic spirit then let loose on the inhabitants of the earth, and his solemn adjuration of the house, to defend and to assist him, in defending their all against it, were, in the highest degree, both imposing and conciliating. In addition, he had the command of bitter contemptuous sarcasm, which tortured to madness. This he could expand or compress at pleasure; even in one member of a sentence, he could inflict a wound that was never healed. Mr Fox having made an able speech, Mr Erskine followed him with one of the very same import. Mr Pitt rose to answer them; he announced his intention to reply to both; "but," said he "I shall make no mention of what was said by the honorable gentleman who spoke last; he did no more than regularly repeat what was said by the member who preceded him, and regularly weaken all he repeated."

'It was prettily said by the historian of the Roman Empire, that "Charles's black collier would soon sink Billy's painted galley;" but never did horoscope prove more false; Mr Fox said more truly, "Pitt will do for us, if he should not do for himself."

'Mr Fox had a captivating earnestness of tone and manner; Mr Pitt was more dignified than earnest. The action of Mr Fox was easy and graceful; Mr Pitt's cannot be praised. It was an observation of the reporters in the gallery, that it required great exertion to follow Mr Fox while he was speaking; none to remember what he had said; that it was easy and delightful to follow Mr Pitt; not so easy to recollect what had delighted them. It may be added, that, in all Mr Fox's speeches, even when he was most violent, there was an unquestionable indication of good humor, which attracted every heart. Where there was such a seeming equipoise of merit, the two last circumstances might be thought to turn the scale; but Mr Pitt's undeviating circumspection,—sometimes concealed, sometimes ostentatiously displayed,—tended to obtain for him, from the considerate and the grave, a confidence which they denied to his rival; besides, Mr Pitt had no coalition, no India bill to defend.

'Much that awes by power or charms by beauty was heard in the harangues of both; but, while Fox spoke, his argument only was thought of; while Pitt harangued, all his other excellencies had their due measure of attention. Each made better speeches than Lord Chatham; neither of them possessed even one of those moments of supreme dominion, which, (he is sensible how very imperfectly,) the Reminiscent has attempted to describe.' pp. 138—141.

We trust we shall be pardoned for introducing the following notice of Lord Thurlow, although it contains his cele-

brated speech, which is familiar to many of our readers. But however celebrated, or however familiar, sentiments so noble and just can hardly be too often repeated, or too strongly impressed. The occasions have been rare in which the dignity of man could appear in so imposing a light as in this speech, and still more rare in which they have been embraced with a power so tremendous, and an effect so astounding.

‘At times, Lord Thurlow was superlatively great. It was the good fortune of the Reminiscent, to hear his celebrated reply to the Duke of Grafton, during the inquiry into Lord Sandwich’s administration of Greenwich hospital. His Grace’s action and delivery, when he addressed the house, were singularly dignified and graceful; but his matter was not equal to his manner. He reproached Lord Thurlow with his plebeian extraction, and his recent admission into the peerage. Particular circumstances caused Lord Thurlow’s reply to make a deep impression on the Reminiscent. His lordship had spoken too often, and began to be heard with a civil but visible impatience. Under these circumstances, he was attacked in the manner we have mentioned. He rose from the woolsack, and advanced slowly to the place, from which the chancellor generally addresses the house; then, fixing on the duke the look of Jove, when he has grasped the thunder; “I am amazed,” he said, in a level tone of voice, “at the attack which the noble duke has made on me. Yes, my lords,” considerably raising his voice, “I am amazed at his Grace’s speech. The noble duke cannot look before him, behind him, or on either side of him, without seeing some noble peer, who owes his seat in this house to his successful exertions in the profession to which I belong. Does he not feel that it is as honorable to owe it to these, as to being the accident of an accident?—To all these noble lords, the language of the noble duke is as applicable and as insulting as it is to myself. But I don’t fear to meet it single and alone. No one venerates the peerage more than I do; but my lords, I must say that the peerage solicited me, not I the peerage. Nay more, I can say and will say, that, as a peer of parliament; as speaker of this right honorable house, as keeper of the great seal; as guardian of his majesty’s conscience; as lord high chancellor of England, nay, even in that character alone, in which the noble duke would think it an affront to be considered—but which character none can deny *me*—as a MAN, I am at this moment as respectable; I beg leave to add, I am at this time, as much respected, as the proudest peer I now look down upon.” The effect of this speech, both within the walls of parliament and out of them, was prodigious. It gave Lord Thurlow an ascendancy in the house, which no chancellor had ever possessed; it invested him, in public opinion, with a charac-

ter of independence and honor ; and this, although he was ever on the unpopular side of politics, made him always popular with the people.' pp. 164—166.

Our extracts shall be closed with the *Reminiscent's* remarks on the care, which certain eminent writers have bestowed on their compositions, before they entrusted them to the public eye. Such rigid practices would alarm the writers of novels, and the reviewers of these modern days. Newton wrote out the first chapter of his *Chronology*, which is the larger part of that great work, eighteen times with his own hand, and he published nothing which he had not copied many times over. Who can refrain from deploring the degeneracy of these our latter days ? To write much and rapidly is now the watchword ; to make one novel a year, and two if possible, or at all events to be always in the press, and running a race with the printers ; to indite poetry, with Pegasus at his greatest speed, by inspiration, leaving sense, nature, reason, truth, and such dull things to the poor possession of the uninitiated ; to send out reviews quarterly, monthly, weekly, on all sorts of subjects, with some of which the writers themselves are acquainted, and of others as ignorant as the readers, whom they would instruct ; these are the feats of modern literature, these the exploits of modern genius, these the trophies of modern learning. But we are revealing secrets. Let us return to the *Reminiscent*.

'We have mentioned,' says he, 'Mr Burke's endless corrections of his compositions ; Bossuet, by the account of his Benedictine editors, was equally laborious ; but in this they differed ; that Burke appears to have been satisfied with his original conceptions, and to have been fastidious only in respect to words and phrases ; Bossuet seems to have been equally dissatisfied with his first thoughts and his first words. The inequality between those works of Bossuet, which the Benedictine editors published from the drafts of them, and those published by himself, is utterly inconceivable ; it is a literary phenomenon ; it might be considered impossible that both should proceed from the same pen, or be the thoughts or words of the same person.'

'Rousseau himself has informed us, that between his first committing of a sentence to paper and his final settlement of it, his obliterations and alterations were countless. That this should have been the case of such writers as Robertson or Gibbon, is not surprising ; their eternal batteries and counter batteries of words seem

to be the effect of much reflection and many second thoughts ; but that it should have been the case with writers like Bossuet, Burke, and Rousseau, who appear to pour streams equally copious and rapid of unpremeditated eloquence, appears extraordinary ; it justifies the common remark, that we seldom read with pleasure, what has not been composed with labor. The *molle atque facetum*, which Horace ascribes to Virgil, indicates a composition which taste has inspired, but which doings and iterated doings have worked into softness. Such are the pages of Addison, such the Offices of Cicero ; such also, but in a superlative degree, are many passages of Milton.' pp. 209, 210.

A long chapter on the jurisprudence of France, both ancient and modern, and on the English law of property, contains many historical facts and ingenious remarks, not only communicating useful hints to the professional student, but adapted to the understanding and improvement of the general reader. Notices of the author's various writings are interspersed throughout the volume, and so arranged as to enable us to trace the course of his studies. His work, entitled *Horæ Juridicæ Subsecivæ*, has been highly approved by lawyers, and his *Horæ Biblicæ*, by theologians, as containing a fund of valuable knowledge, well digested, and compressed within a small compass. He has written several theological essays, and also the lives of Bossuet, Fenelon, and other eminent persons. He is wayward in some of his poetical criticisms. In preferring Homer to Virgil, and Dryden to Pope, he has our full consent to enjoy his opinion ; but we do not agree, that 'Virgil's language sometimes ceases to be Latin,' nor believe that the 'works of Gray are more read and admired than those of any other English poet.' Nor shall we soon be convinced, that the 'muse of Gray was of a higher order' than that of Goldsmith. But the author is so candid and good tempered in all his criticisms, as well as in all his writings, that for our own credit we forbear to quarrel with him on so small a matter as that of extolling a favorite poet, a liberty belonging to every one that chooses to exercise it, and we take leave of his little volume, with grateful feelings toward the reminiscents, for the sources of entertainment, which he has opened to us.
